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SECURITY INFORMATION
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

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COUNTRY Albania

SUBJECT Military

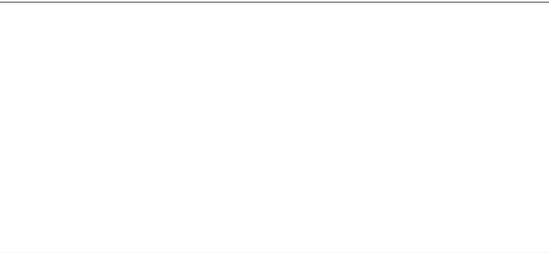
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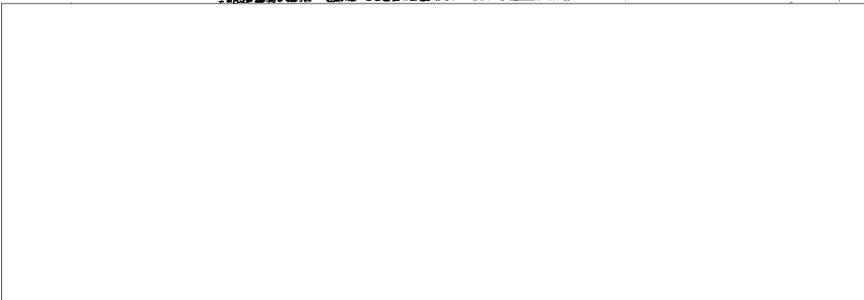
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MILITARY INFORMATION ON ALBANIA

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LAND FORCES

An infantry unit of unknown strength is quartered in the former Italian barracks in front of the airport on the Durres-Tirana motor road in the western outskirts of the city.

[Redacted] in Albanian land forces at 50,000-60,000 men.

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During the 1950 military review at Tirana, [Redacted] about 40 tanks equipped with guns with 3-meter barrels and muzzle brakes (type and caliber not known); about 30 armored cars (type unknown); a unit composed of about 100 motorcyclists with machine guns on the handle bars; some modern artillery pieces (number unspecified) mounted on carriages with pneumatic-tired wheels, track-drawn; and units in trucks and on foot.

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An infantry brigade of about 400 men is stationed in Drashiovisa, a place about 15-20 kilometers southeast of Vlone on the road to Tepelenë. This information comes from hearsay.

AIRPORTS

Vlone

An unarmed, ungarrisoned airport is located in the western outskirts of the city on swampy terrain. It has no airport equipment. A concrete runway built by the Italians was put into working order again in 1946 - 1947.

Tirana

A military and civilian airport is located in the western outskirts of Tirana adjacent to the south side of the Durres-Tirana motor road. It still has equipment left by the Italians. The runway is in good working order.

The airport is chiefly used for civilian aviation. Four or five military aircraft (type and specifications unknown) are stationed at the field but do not engage in flights. Because of the well-known incident with English warships navigating the Corfu Canal, the Albanian government always insists that it has no military planes.

Uj Te Ftonte (Krio Nero)

The iron hanger built by the Italians before the war and used by the "Coast Wing," which was located on the shore of Vlone Bay near Uj Te Ftontë, has been disassembled and transported elsewhere for purposes unknown to the source.

FLIGHTS OF ITALIAN AIRPLANES OVER ALBANIAN TERRITORY

Unknown aircraft frequently fly over Albanian territory and drop propaganda leaflets against the present Communist regime in Albania. It is the common opinion that the aircraft are Italian.

It is a fact that, in August 1949, four Albanian citizens parachuted from such planes in the Sevaster area (Vlone). They were well armed and were equipped with sending and receiving radio sets. They were ordered to kill themselves if on the point of being arrested, and had instructions for making arrangements for other parachutists. One of them was wounded in landing. All four were arrested the day following the jump. The Albanian authorities made use of them to send false messages in code under the name agreed on for the station, "Giovanni" (Youths), reporting, among other things, that 40,000 rebels, including deserters and dissenters, had taken refuge in the mountains and were asking for food, clothing, and arms. It seems that the Italians had joined them there only once.

In 1950 five more Albanians jumped from planes in the region between Gjinoaster and Koroë. They were captured and shot in a few days.

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DEFENSIVE MEASURESVlone

Antiaircraft gun emplacements are located on a height called Gus Baba in the northern outskirts of the city. The same emplacements were used for Italian antiaircraft guns in the war.

[redacted] there were three or four 20-millimeter antiaircraft machine guns there from the noise when they opened fire on unknown aircraft flying over the zone.

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Sazan Island

No work has been done on new fortifications or on underground submarine shelters. The old German and Italian fortifications and emplacements have been summarily repaired and put back in operation. At present, the island is garrisoned by an artillery unit of about 50 men.

No torpedo motorboats or submarines of any nationality are based here.

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Vlone

Caves are being excavated on the heights about one kilometer east of the port. The caves are about 500-600 meters from the road to Uj Te Ftonté and are near the psychiatric hospital used by the Italians during the war as a military hospital. Work was begun in August - September 1950. The source reports that the excavations are intended for artillery emplacements in a trench.

Pascia' Liman

Excavations are in progress in Pascia' Liman, back of Vlone Bay. During the war the Germans had dug some trenches here. [redacted]

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Linguetta Cape

[redacted] three coastal artillery emplacements, formerly Italian, have been maintained here.

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RECALL TO THE ARMY FOR TRAINING

Albanian citizens from 25 to 40 years old are being recalled for a month's training in the army. The source does not know whether this recall occurs annually or not. Even women are subject to military training, especially officers' wives.

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ALBANIAN NAVY

Ships

[Redacted] 2 tugs of an unknown type and 3-4 motor patrol boats (specifications unknown) are stationed in Vlone harbor.

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Ports

Vloneⁿ port has only the installations left by the Italians. No work has been done on enlarging or strengthening it. Two wharves numbered 0 and 1 serve the barges which come in loaded with material for the ships in the harbor.

On rare occasions, a Soviet or Polish ship unloads a small amount of unidentified material, which is carried off by trucks to unidentified localities. In general, maritime commerce goes through the port of Durres.

SOVIET DEPOTS, FORCES, SUBMARINES



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Forces



[Redacted] four or five Soviet engineers in civil dress occupy some offices near the city port. There is a rumor that they are making studies on: building a cement factory, chemical exploitation of local products, and prospecting in this area.

Submarines and Warships

No submarines or warships are based on Vlone Bay or on Sazan Island.

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